



Environmental Health Activities in West Virginia



NCEH in Partnership with West Virginia

The National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). NCEH's work focuses on three program areas: identifying environmental hazards, measuring exposure to environmental chemicals, and preventing health effects that result from environmental hazards. NCEH has approximately 450 employees and a budget for 2004 of approximately \$189 million; its mission is to promote health and quality of life by preventing or controlling diseases and deaths that result from interactions between people and their environment.

NCEH and partners in **West Virginia** collaborate on a variety of environmental health projects throughout the state. In **fiscal years 2000–2004**, NCEH awarded more than **\$570,000** in direct funds and services to West Virginia for various projects. These projects include activities related to addressing asthma, helping state laboratories respond to chemical terrorism, and preventing childhood lead poisoning. In addition, West Virginia benefits from national-level prevention and response activities conducted by NCEH or NCEH-funded partners.

Identifying Environmental Hazards

NCEH identifies, investigates, and tracks environmental hazards and their effects on people's health. Following is an example of such activities that NCEH has conducted or supported in **West Virginia**.

- **Addressing Asthma from a Public Health Perspective**—NCEH is funding the **West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources** to partially implement its asthma plan, which was developed through a statewide collaborative effort, and to continue asthma surveillance activities. Implementation of the statewide comprehensive asthma plan will reduce the burden of asthma in the home, school, and occupational environments through science-

based interventions, statewide partnerships, and surveillance.

Funding began in fiscal year 2004 and ends in fiscal year 2006.

Measuring Exposure to Environmental Chemicals

NCEH measures environmental chemicals in people to determine how to protect people and improve their health. Following are examples of such activities that NCEH has conducted or supported in **West Virginia**.

Funding

- **Antiterrorism Funding to Increase State Chemical Laboratory Capacity**—In fiscal year 2004, CDC provided more than \$381,000 to **West Virginia** to help expand chemical laboratory capacity to prepare for and respond to chemical-terrorism incidents and other chemical emergencies. This expansion will allow full participation of chemical-terrorism response laboratories in the Laboratory Response Network.

Services

- **Helping State Public Health Laboratories Respond to Chemical Terrorism**—NCEH is working with **West Virginia's** public health laboratory to prepare state laboratory scientists to measure chemical-terrorism agents or their metabolites in people's blood or urine. NCEH is transferring analytic methods for measuring chemical-terrorism agents (including cyanide-based compounds and other chemicals) to West Virginia. In addition, NCEH instituted a proficiency-testing program to measure the comparability of the state's analytic results with results from the NCEH laboratory.
- **Lipid Standardization Program (LSP)**—NCEH provides two lipid research laboratories in **West Virginia** with accuracy-based standardization support for analytic measurement. These

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laboratories are involved in one or more ongoing lipid metabolism longitudinal studies or clinical trials that investigate risk factors and complications associated with cardiovascular disease. The LSP, supported by NCEH's Lipid Reference Laboratory, provides quarterly analytic performance challenges and statistical assessment reports that allow program participants to monitor performance over time to help ensure the accuracy and comparability of study results and findings.

■ **Newborn Screening Quality Assurance**

Program—NCEH provides proficiency-testing services and dried-blood-spot quality-control materials to monitor and help assure the quality of screening program operations for newborns in **West Virginia**. West Virginia screens newborns for four diseases or conditions. The importance of accurate screening tests for genetic metabolic diseases cannot be overestimated. Testing of blood spots collected from newborns is mandated by law in almost every state to promote early intervention that can prevent mental retardation, severe illness, and premature death.

Preventing Health Effects That Result from Environmental Hazards

NCEH promotes safe environmental public health practices to minimize exposure to environmental hazards and prevent adverse health effects. Following is an example of such activities that NCEH has conducted or supported in **West Virginia**.

■ **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention**

Program—The **West Virginia Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (WV CLPPP)** has received NCEH funding since 1995. In 2001, the program screened 12,159 children for lead poisoning; 147 children under 6 years of age had elevated blood lead levels.

WV CLPPP is using NCEH funds to develop, implement, and evaluate statewide screening plans, strengthen the surveillance system, and analyze and interpret statewide population-based surveillance data. The program is also using NCEH funds to evaluate program activities and ensure case management and educational activities.

Resources

NCEH develops materials that public health professionals, medical-care providers, emergency responders, decision makers, and the public can use to identify and track environmental hazards that threaten human health and to prevent or mitigate exposure to those hazards. NCEH's resources cover a range of environmental public health issues. These issues include air pollution and respiratory health (e.g., asthma, carbon monoxide poisoning, and mold exposures), biomonitoring to determine whether selected chemicals in the environment get into people and to what degree, childhood lead poisoning, emergency preparedness for and response to chemicals and radiation, environmental health services, environmental public health tracking, international emergency and refugee health, laboratory sciences as applied to environmental health, radiation studies, safe disposal of chemical weapons, specific health studies, vessel sanitation, and veterans' health.

For more information about NCEH programs, activities, and publications as well as other resources, contact the NCEH Health Line toll-free at 1-888-232-6789, e-mail NCEHinfo@cdc.gov, or visit the NCEH Web site at www.cdc.gov/nceh.